

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-4 are amended. Claim 6 is added. No new matter is added by these amendments. Support for these amendments can be found at least on page 8, lines 11-13, page 11, lines 30 and 31, page 15, lines 10-13 and page 7, lines 6 and 7 of Applicants' specification. Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,992,712 to Yoshida. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The Office Action asserts that Yoshida teaches all of the features recited in independent claim 1. However, Yoshida does not teach, nor would it have suggested, an imaging device including at least "a storage unit which pre-stores information representing a relation between a dark current component being superimposed on a pixel signal of each of effective pixels and an output signal of each of optical black pixels, said effective pixels being arranged in a pre-determined effective pixel area on an imaging sensor, and said optical black pixels being arranged in a pre-determined optical black area which is a different area from said effective pixel area on the imaging sensor," as recited in claim 1.

Yoshida teaches performing the black current correction on the output signals of a given area on the CCD based on the output signals of the same given area, and requires reading of at least two frames in order to perform the black current correction. Furthermore, Yoshida teaches that the black current correction is performed by reading black current components from the CCD pixels while closing the shutter before the actual imaging. Thus, Yoshida reads a normal image from the CCD while opening the shutter during the actual imaging, and then detects the dark current components from the normal image. Therefore, Yoshida determines the clip level and the amount of gain corrections based on the former

frame and reads the later frame after correcting the aperture value according to the amount of gain corrections, and performs processes such as the black current correction and the determining the clip level and gain correction up to the normal image.

Since Yoshida uses the area of the normal image on the CCD, which is the same as the area to be read for determining the black current component, the black current components are determined directly. Accordingly, it is unnecessary in Yoshida to perform calculations to determine the black current components. Therefore, Yoshida does not have to pre-store the information representing relations between the dark current component of each of the effective pixels on the effective pixel area in the output signal of the optical black pixel arranged in a position corresponding to that effective pixel on the optical black area, as recited in claim 1.

For at least the reasons above, Yoshida cannot reasonably be considered to teach, or to have suggested, the combinations of all of the features recited in at least independent claim 1. Further, claims 2-5 would also not have been suggested by the applied prior art references for at least the respective dependency of these claims on allowable independent claim 1, as well as for the separately patentable subject matter that each of these claims recite.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) are respectfully requested.

New claim 6 is patentable based on the dependency from allowable claim 1, as well as for the separately patentable subject recited therein.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-6 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

Petition for Extension of Time

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